

Millennianism:

O R,

CHRIST's

Thousand Years R E I G N
upon Earth, Considered.

I N A

Familiar Letter

T O A

F R I E N D

By Dr Lancelot Addison Dr of Litchfield

*Non sequimur temerè Animadversiones eorum,
qui suas conjecturas ab omnibus tanquam decre-
ta haberi volunt, quiq; sibi persuadent omnia
opinionibus suis contraria errorem esse vel hæ-
resin. Dupin.*

London, Printed for W. Crook, at the Green Dragon
without Temple-Bar, 1693.

CHRIST

THE

EXHIBIT

FBI & N.D.

The following is a list of the exhibits which have been received by the FBI and N.D. in the case of the Green Dragon.

Exhibit 1 - A photograph of the Green Dragon.

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I Now send you what you desire, my Thoughts of the *Millennian* Principle, and with such simplicity and freedom of Stile, as may assure you, I use no Artifice, nor manage any Design. I am not ignorant, as you say, that this Doctrine is grown popular, and has got great footing and credit in the World, but whether deservedly, or otherwise, I venture not to determine, my present purpose being plainly to impart my Sentiments concerning it.

If we trace the *Millennian* Opinion to its Original, we shall find it to be of *Jewish* Extraction, and that it sprang from a gross Mistake the *Jews* ever had of the Prophecies, touching the Kingdom of *Messiah*; to whom the Oracles of the Old

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Test-

Testament gave the Titles of Priest and Prophet, and in a more emphatical and eminent manner, the Title of King : The principal Function of whose Royal Office, was to consist in the Administration and Government of a Kingdom. And the same Oracles for once calling *Messiah* a Priest after the Order of *Melchizedek*, and twice or thrice a Prophet, they fifty times, saith a great Observer, give him the Title of King : And by the name of Kingdom, they denote that Intendance and Authority which he was to have over the People of *Israel*, and the rest of the World. And that there might be some Proportion between the condition of the Kingdom and the Dignity of him who was to rule it, the Prophets represent this Kingdom as marvellously great, and Sovereignly magnificent, setting *Messiah* as far above all other Potentates, as they were above their Subjects.

But

But because the Divine Scriptures do not evidently set down the nature of the Magnificence of Christ's Reign and Kingdom, the *Jews* took the liberty to figure to themselves such a Notion thereof, as agreed best with their Ambition and Interest; and interpreted all Texts relating to the Kingdom of *Messiah*, of Temporal Greatness and Glory, without the least regard to any thing therein that was Spiritual.

And not to take notice of the particular humourfome Extravagances of the Rabbins, and the fanciful Opinions and Glosses with which they have abused and corrupted all things relating to the Kingdom of Christ, it may suffice to remark, That they expected a *Messiah* who should be an illustrious Conquerour, and by force of Arms subdue all the Nations of the Earth, and render their own Prosperity the Envy of the World. And that which chiefly cherish'd in them this exorbitant Imagination, and prompted them to such extrava-

gant Hopes, was, their natural inclination to earthly and sensible Possessions ; of which they were so strangely enamour'd, that they had no taste nor relish of any thing else : *Make us*, said the old *Israelites*, *Gods that may go before us* : An invisible Divinity did not content them, but they must have one endued with sensible Attributes, a God whom they might see and handle ; as if one who was nothing but Spirit, had not been able to protect them, and to finish what they had undertaken. And this carnal Humour was so natural to the *Jews*, that it never left that Earthly-minded Nation, but had still so far the Ascendant over them, that they understood all Prophecies of *Messiah* accordingly.

And as once no God but one that was visible could please them, so after they would be content with no Christ, but one invested with secular Splendour and Glory, with whom they were to reign in worldly State and Magnificence.

And

And they were the easilier induced to this Conceit, because they had never seen nor read of any Government but what was Temporal. Much had been told them of the Eastern Monarchs, and of the vast Extent and Prowess of their Dominions; but they had never observed that those puissant Emperors did ever pretend to have Authority over any other thing than the Body. And as to their own Kings, they likewise never saw them noted for the exercise of any other Royalty than what was purely Earthly.

For tho the Reign of *David* and *Solomon* had something of Spiritual in it, which did prefigure the Kingdom of *Messiah*; yet the *Jews* did not understand nor regard the Mystery, but stuck at the Letter, and look'd no farther than the Rind, or visible out side of the Empire of those two Kings, in whom so much of the *Messiah* was typified.

Indeed the *Jews* lived under the Dispensation of a Covenant, where- in things Spiritual were contain'd under the Cover of things Corporal. They likewise believed the same Covenant to be perpetual, and not to be superannuated, but to last for ever. They believed the Benefits accruing from the *Messiah* were likewise Earthly; and they interpreted all the great things spoken of him in Scripture, to respect his Poms and Grandeurs in this present world, and that they were design'd to share in them as his Favourite-people.

At several times they had undergone severe Calamities, for which they hop'd for Reparation at the coming of that mighty Conqueror whom they had pourtraict'd in their Minds, and that he should crown them with Victory over their Enemies, and reverse and pull down the *Roman* Power, to which they had a more peculiar Aversion. But when they saw a Man calling himself the *Messiah*, who in all outward appearance

rance was mean and contemptible, that he appear'd in the Head of no more formidable an Army, than Twelve poor Fishermen ; they were so offended thereat, that they could by no means bring themselves to believe that he was *Messiah*.

And notwithstanding the Authority of his Preaching, the Wonderfulness of his Wisdom, and the Splendor of his Miracles, did astonish, and move them to pay him Veneration : Yet all their good Opinion of him sunk and fell to the Ground, when they saw he came not up to that Greatness they expected. They knew his Birth place was despicable, his Parentage mean ; his Education in a Carpenter's House (where they supposed he followed that abject Trade) his Company very ordinary, his manner of Life retired ; all which, and the like things, were so contrary to the Opinion they had imbibed of Christ, and to their Hopes of the power wherewith they expected him to come, that

they concluded this could not be he, and so rejected him.

And tho there were some, who notwithstanding the meanness of our Lord's Appearance, did believe him to be the Christ, and became his Profelytes ; yet they did not quit their Opinion of his Temporal Kingdom, but still flatter'd themselves with the expectation thereof. And tho it was not then, yet in due time they thought it would be manifested to their peculiar Satisfaction, and the Wonder of all the World. Had not the Disciples been fully perswaded Christ would have a Temporal Kingdom, they would never have contrasted which of them should be greatest therein. Men in their Wits seldom fall out about what they really believe neither is, nor ever will be. The Question the Disciples put to our Saviour at the point of his Ascension, *viz. Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel?* is very remarkable to this purpose. And what our Sa-

Saviour returns for answer, *viz.* That it was not for them to know the Times and Seasons, does not in the least hint any such Kingdom ever to be ; but it roundly rebukes their Curiosity in enquiring into the times, and in some measure their Opinion concerning his Kingdom. It is not to be doubted but that the Disciples, as well as the other *Jews*, had the same Notion and Hope of Christ's being to have a Pompous Reign upon Earth. And as to the Modern *Jews* they are as fond of this Conceit, as ever their Ancestors were. For at this very day they feed themselves with the pleasing Idea of a *Messiah* to come, who shall deliver them out of the Hands of their Enemies, rendezvous them in *Palæstine*, rebuild *Jerusalem* for them, and by signal Victories and Triumphs, subdue all the Kings of the Earth, and put the Nations under their Feet. A *Messiah* they wait for, in whom shall be abundantly fulfilled in the very Letter, all those great things spoken
of

of in the Second and Seventy second Psalms : And they deride all those who interpret those Passages, of the wonderful Blessings of God upon the Preaching of the Apostles ; by which not only many thousands of the *Jews*, but the *Heathen* over all the World were brought in to the Faith of Christ.

You ask me, Sir, what I think of Christ's delaying to give his Disciples a clear Description of the Nature of his Kingdom, and wherein it was to consist, seeing this would have been an Authentick Confutation of their Errors about it, and have either convinc'd, or left them excuseless.

If it may be safe to conjecture in this Matter, it was because their Bottles were not yet fit to receive this new Wine, and that it could not be put into them without danger of a considerable Rupture. A plain Declaration of the nature of his Kingdom was one of those things

things they were not yet able to bear.

For the utter rejection of the *Jewish* Nation (instead of restoring the Kingdom to *Israel*) together with the entire change of the whole *Mosaick* Dispensation, and the bringing in of all Nations in common within the Pale of the Church, were things belonging to Christ's Kingdom, and which were to happen when ever it began, and were indeed such hard Sayings to the Disciples, who entertain'd quite contrary Hopes, that they could neither swallow nor digest them. The glorious earthly Kingdom of *Messiah* was the *Jews* topping Expectation, and of so long standing, and become so popular, that it was not very safe to confront it. Besides, many Texts, as they fancied, seem'd not only to favour, but confirm it; and above all, it was so taking with the *Jews*, and they had set their Hearts so much upon it, that it would scarce have been prudent

dent to have endeavour'd all on the sudden to divert them from it. And therefore our Lord, who did all things with a marvellous Wisdom, used gentle Pauses, and Preparatives to wean his Disciples from this Error: He dealt with them according to their Strength, and drew them off from their Misconceptions with the Cords of a Man.* When they were at variance about Superiority in the Kingdom they expected, Christ gently diverts them from this pleasing Fancy, by telling them, *The Kings of the Gentiles, did exercise Lordship over them, but that it was not to be so among them.* And he told the Wife of Zebedee, petitioning him for her Sons Preferment in his Kingdom, *That it did not belong to him, but to the Father, to dispose of the first Seats, and highest Places in his Kingdom:* And he advised them rather to think of partaking with him in his Sufferings, than of raising themselves higher than their Condition would bar. Indeed upon several Occasions

S. Luk. 22.
25, 26.

S. Matt.
20: 23.

ons Christ spoke many things, which if the Disciples had attentively observed, they might have smelt the Air of his Kingdom. His entrance into *Jerusalem* was one of the most Solemn Passages of his Life, and bad fairest for Secular Royalty : His riding upon an Asses Foal was a Royal Gesture and Ceremony, as also his receiving the Acclamations due to him as a King ; yet all this fell infinitely short of that Grandeur which the *Jews* believed was to attend the coming of the true *Messiah*.

But the nearer Christ drew to his Passion, the clearer Declarations he gave of his Kingdom. When the Disciples stood amazed at the Difficulty Christ made of a Rich Man's entring into the Kingdom of Heaven, one of them (thinking themselves loose enough from that impediment, having left all to follow him) demanded, *What they should have for becoming poor for his sake ; to whom Jesus answered ; Ye which have followed me in the Regeneration, when*
the

the Son of Man shall sit on the Throne of his Glory, ye also shall sit on twelve Thrones, judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel, St. Matt. 19. 28. In these Words, I am humbly of Opinion, our Lord Christ had an Eye to that Renovation of the World, which the *Jews*, tho in an earthly carnal Sense, expected should come to pass at the coming of *Messiah*. Now, our Saviour to correct this Error, and to call back the Minds of the Disciples to a right apprehension of the thing they mistook, uses the Word *Γεννησις*, which our Translation renders Regeneration; but it properly signifies a New or Second State: And the Grammarians say, it imports to be born, or made the second time. The *Pythagoreans* used it for the return of the Soul; or when that Soul which was in him that is dead, comes back to life again in another Body. But in our Lord's use of the Word, it implies that Renovation which began at his Resurrection, or Ascension; and it is not to be under-

derstood of the Body and Substance of the World ; but it consisted in the renewing of the Manners, Doctrine, and a Dispensation conducing thereunto : Men, and not the Fabrick of the World; were to be renewed and regenerated.

In this new Age and State of the Church, the Disciples were to sit upon Thrones, they were to have a Power instated on them as Christ's Successors, somewhat proportionable to that of the several Rulers of the Tribes among the *Jews*. And with this Power they were invested by Christ at his departure from them into Heaven. But learned Men are of Opinion, that this Text is not to be understood of the Persons of the Twelve Apostles, because *Judas*, one of them, miscarried before it came to pass, but that it was meant of their Doctrine. As if our Lord had said, ' When I shall bring Judgment upon ' this most unjust Nation, then your ' Doctrine which you have preached ' in my Name, shall judge and condemn them. A

A few Hours before his Passion, Christ told *Pilate*, *That his Kingdom was not of this World*, John 18. 36. which Words of Christ, if they had been maturely considered, might have given a full Confutation of the *Jews* Error, and removed the *Romans* Jealousie, concerning his Kingdom: For he told them plainly enough, That he did not pretend to, nor aim at any Earthly Sovereignty: Which Declaration coming from his own Mouth at the time of his last Tryal, and in so great a Solemnity, was authentick beyond all Exception?

But all this did not satisfy even his own Disciples, who still hanker'd after, what they most desired, a pompous temporal Kingdom; as appears by the Question they put to our Lord as he was ready to mount up to Heaven: *Acts* 1. 6. *Wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel.*

They

They seem still to have the same fanciful Conceptions about Christ's Temporal Reign with the rest of that Nation; tho they doubted and hesitated as to the time: For they thought belike he would not then restore the Kingdom, or shew any such kindness to that Generation, who had dealt so basely and perfidiously with him: who were slain under the actual Guilt of his Bloodshed, and had committed so many Wickednesses against him. Yet for all this they thought that that look'd like the most probable time for the Great Restauration which they were taught by their own Traditions, was to happen at some notable Resurrection. Now there could never be a Resurrection more remarkable than Christ's; of which themselves were unquestionable Witnesses. So that it was no wonder that they doubted whether the Kingdom of *Messiah* was not then to commence.

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But

But the Disciples did still but only guess at the Reign of the *Messiah* ; and neither the time. nor manner of it was yet clearly manifested unto them, both seeming to be purposely reserv'd for the Stupendious Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost descended on them, and taught them all things necessary both for themselves and the whole Church, and gave a compleat Form to the Christian Religion. Then it was that they began to have their Eyes opened, and plainly to see how Christ's Kingdom was no other than the Church, or the Society of Believers, over whom he was to rule by his Word and Spirit ; and in whose Government there was to be nothing Earthly and Carnal, but every thing wholly Spiritual, Heavenly and Divine. ' Christ neither
 ' had, nor would have any Temporal
 ' Power, nor did the Apostles pre-
 ' tend to any by Virtue of the Com-
 ' mission they received from him.
 ' He

' He communicated no other Power
 ' to his Church on Earth, than what
 ' himself claimed whilst he remain'd
 ' in it ; which was purely Spiritual
 ' in order to a future State, and
 ' void of all Temporal Power and
 ' Coercion. And the first Principle
 ' upon which our whole Christi-
 ' ty lies, is, That all the Advantages,
 ' Privileges, and Preeminences, that
 ' the Church can pretend to derive
 ' from our Saviour, are purely Spi-
 ' ritual, relating only to the State
 ' of Souls in the World to
 ' come.

The preaching and propagation
 of the Gospel by Christ and his
 Apostles, is in several places of Scri-
 pture called the Kingdom of God,
 or of Heaven : And after Pentecost,
 when the Spirit came upon the Apo-
 stles, we never find them interpre-
 ting Christ's Kingdom of any thing-
 but the preaching of the Gospel ; as
 being that whereby he came to-
 reign in their Hearts who believed-

it. And now we find the Apostles to have quite laid aside their Expectation of Christ's 'cutting off all 'those Nations that were disobedient to the *Jewish* Law : and of re-deeming *Israel* from the *Gentile* 'Yoke, and of establishing a Kingdom and Age among the *Jews*, 'which should be crown'd with all 'manner of Delights. And instead of the abundance and Prosperity they once dream'd to enjoy at the coming of *Messiah*, they now prepare for the Cross, and with Chearfulness and Patience to undergo Calamities and Persecutions, and by suffering for Christ on Earth, to fit themselves to reign with him in Heaven.

But the Apostles having retracted their Opinion concerning Christ's Temporal Kingdom, and consequently subverted the Foundation of *Millennianism*, you wonder how it came to be followed by some Christians, who lived, if not in, yet
next

next Door to the times of the Apostles. Now, to cure you of this wonder, which betrays your good Will to *Millennianism*, I send you the following *Recipe*.

It evidently appears by Ecclesiastical History, that in the first times of the Christian Church, vain Opinions began to take Foot, and that the *Millennium* appear'd with the earliest: For in the next Age to, if not in that of the Apostles, we read of some who held, 'That the Church should enjoy great Prosperity here below for the space of a thousand Years. *Cerintus* is commonly produced for the first Author of this Opinion; and he is said to have written a Book concerning it; pretending that he was thereunto directed by the Revelations of the Apostle St. *John*, and by his own Revelations, which he gave out were sent him by the Ministry of Angels.

But the *Millennians*, unwilling their Opinion should have no better Father than *Cerintbus*, a notorious Heretick, derive its Pedigree from Men of much greater Honesty and Credit ; such as *Papias*, *Irenæus*, *Justin*, *Athenagoras*, *Clemens*, *Tertulian*, *Lactantius*, and others of the Ancients.

As to *Papias*, who is generally accounted the first that professed *Chiliasm* ; he was Bishop of *Hierapolis* in *Asia*, and, as most say, Disciple of *John* the Evangelist, or of another of that Name. So that for his Office, and the Honour of his being Scholar to some great Master, his Person and Doctrine met with considerable Credit and Regard. 'Tis certain, that he was very warm in the Defence of the *Millennium*. and labour'd Tooth and Nail to make it the Doctrine of the Church. And he was wont to be out of Humour with all who would not hold as he did, *viz.* ' That Christ
' should

' should come and gather the Elect
 ' to *Jerusalem*; there to reign with
 ' him for a thousand Years, and
 ' during that time to enjoy all man-
 ' ner of Delights. *Eusebius* reckons
 this among the extravagant Conceits
 whereof *Papias* was guilty. One
 saith, That he was wont to talk
 with great assurance of the many
 things he had learned from unwrit-
 ten Tradition, and instanced in new
 Parables, new Institutions of Christ,
 not mentioned in the Gospels, and
 certain fabulous Stories : among
 which *Eusebius* reckons his Opinion
 concerning Christ's thousand Years
 Reign upon Earth. And the same
 Historian avers, That *Papias* fell into
 this Error, by rudely understanding
 the Sayings and Institutions of the
 Apostles, and taking those things in
 a literal, which he ought to have
 taken in a mystical Sence. *Papias*
 had the name of a well-meaning
 Man ; but he was look'd upon as no
 Conjuror. His stock of Learning

was but little, and his Discretion less; as appears, saith *Eusebius*, by his Writings: And according to the general Character given of him, he was *Homo simplex*, & *minimi ingenii*; much given to tell and hear Wonders and strange Stories; and so credulous that he would believe the most fabulous Reports that were told him. So that it is no wonder, that with other ridiculous Errors, he imbibed this of the *Millennium*. For being credulous and undiscerning, Fallacies went as easily down with him as Truths; and what was yet more to be lamented, he often father'd palpable Falsities upon the Apostles themselves. And certainly nothing in Religion is more pernicious than easily to believe, and greedily to embrace things that have a shadow of Piety and Truth, without mature tryal and examination: For this will mix vain Visions, and false Representations with Religion; wherein the least Truth is more valuable

uable than all we can imagine of our own Heads : And in this case, a *real Taper* is more serviceable than a *painted Sun*.

Now *Millennianism* can have no great cause of boasting to have *Papias* for its Patriarch, who was a Person, saith a late Author, not of any reverend Authority in the Church of God. He trusted to unwritten Traditions, and thro' his easiness of Belief, was very apt to be put upon. Monsieur *Amyraut* is of the mind, That he was infected with *Millennianism* by some of the Primitive Impostors, or that he suck'd it from the old *Sybils* : But to say that he received it from St. *John*, were to ruin the Authority of that great Apostle, and expose Christian Religion to the Laughter and Mockery of its Enemies.

The next we find cited in favour of this Opinion, is Holy *Irenæus*, who having being Scholar to *Papias*, might be easily leavened with his Doctrine.

Doctrinē. This good Man was a most curious and critical Searcher into all Opinions, so that not any heretical Tenet was unknown to him: he had the Poets and Philosophers *ad unguem*, and was exquisitely acquainted with the Holy Scriptures; and though he was furnished with all sorts of Learning; yet he avoided all Ostentation thereof: He loved that his Style should be Sincere, and not Corpulent, and though very able to use, yet alway declin'd Elegancy of Speech; professing his Care was not to delight, but to instruct his Reader.

But for all this he was not exempt from Errors, but held many things now condemn'd as Heterodox; as, 'That the Souls of wicked Men should cease to be at all, after they had been long tormented. But that which would be most for our purpose, is to find out in his Writings where *Irenæus* asserts, 'That just Men after they have reigned a thousand

' thousand years with Christ on
 ' Earth, and satiated themselves with
 ' Delights, shall enter into Heaven,
 ' and there enjoy eternal Blessedness. I
 would gladly see any place in *Irenæus*,
 where such a Doctrin as this is main-
 tained by him : For as to those words
 which are alledged by *Blondel* to as-
 sert this Opinion, they are not to be
 found, as he cites them, in *lib. 5.*
cap. 35. of the Edition of *Gallafius*,
 or *Grynæus* ; however I will put
 them down, as I find them quoted
 in *French*. ' The Days shall come,
 ' in which shall grow up Stocks
 ' of Vines, which shall have ten
 ' thousand Twigs, and on every
 ' Twig ten thousand Branches, and
 ' on every Branch ten thousand
 ' Sprigs, and on every Sprig ten thou-
 ' sand Grapes, and in every Grape
 ' ten thousand Grains, and every
 ' Grain being pressed, shall yield
 ' twenty five measures of Wine ; and
 ' then every one of the Saints shall
 ' take one of these Raisins, and
 ' another

' another Raisin shall cry, I am a
 ' better Raisin than that, take me
 ' and bless God for me: And all o
 ' ther Fruits, and Seeds, and Herbs
 ' shall yield the same proportion.
 These are the Words out of *Irenæus*,
 to prove that he held a *Millennium*;
 but they are not to be found in ei-
 ther of the mentioned Editions. And
 it is well for the credit of that Holy
 Martyr of our Lord, that they are
 not to be found in his Writings: ' For
 ' tho he was, saith *Photius*, apt
 ' to cloud the most evident Truths
 ' of Religion with spurious Argu-
 ' ments and Reasons, yet he was
 ' never observ'd to be guilty of such
 ' Grotesques as these; which are
 more extravagant than the Phren-
 sies of the Rabbins, or the Revela-
 tions of *Mohomet*. *Gallastius* observes,
 That *Irenæus* was thought to favour
 the Error of the *Chilias*, but that he
 could not conclude any such thing
 from the 21. Chap. of his 5th Book
 which was alledged to prove it.

But

But to grant what cannot be made out, That *Irenæus* was a *Millennary* ; yet no Man's Authority is sufficient to defend an Error, or to justify our professing it : Besides, I am of Opinion, That none of our Modern *Chilias*ts, will be able to demonstrate, that *Irenæus* was of their Judgment ; tho he might let some Words drop from his Pen in favour of an Opinion that was held by his Master *Papias*. *Irenæus* by the consent of all, was an humble and mortified Man, and of great Austerity and Discipline, and so can hardly be imagin'd to have sed his Fancy with the Expectation of a Kingdom on Earth, wherein Christians (according to the first Notion of the *Millennium*) should live for a thousand Years in all manner of bodily Pleasures, and have every Sense entertain'd with its proper Delight : For the Primitive *Millennaries* tell you, That during Christ's Reign on Earth, 'nothing should be seen but Feasts, Marriages

'ges and Jolities, like those of the
 'ancient Sacrifices, which were kept
 'with magnificent Festivals: which
 was a very fair Transcript of that
 Kingdom the *Jews* expected at the
 coming of the *Messiah*. Thus, in-
 stead of a Spiritual Paradise, such as
 Christianity teaches its Professors to
 hope for, the *Millennians* promised
 to themselves a Paradise fit to en-
 tertain the most Sensual and Animal
 among Men: From which *Mahomet*
 may well be supposed to have taken
 the draught of that Paradise where-
 in his *Mussulmen* are at last to be re-
 gal'd. Now a State having but the
 least affinity with this of the old
Millennaries, cannot be thought to
 have ever enter'd into the mind of
 a Man so mortified and austere as the
 pious *Irenæus*.

If Errors could receive any real
 value and approbation from those
 who maintain them, *Millennianism*
 might deservedly have a great
 Vogue and Esteem in the World.

For

the For it is generally believed, that not
 cept only the credulous *Papias* set it up,
 ich and the humble *Irenæus* favour'd it
 hat for his sake, but that learned *Justin*
 the openly profess'd, maintain'd, and
 in- press'd it as the Faith of all the
 as Orthodox : And that Passage in his
 to Decalogue, against *Trypho*, is preg-
 sed nant to this purpose ; for there he
 en- faith plainly thus : ' As for me and
 nal ' all Christians who follow the Ortho-
 et ' dox Faith, we hold, That there
 en ' shall be a Resurrection of the Flesh :
 re- ' That *Jerusalem* shall be rebuilt,
 e- ' enlarged, beautified, and inhabited
 he ' with Believers for a thousand years :
 ld according to what *Isaiah*, *Ezekiel*
 to and other Prophets have foretold of
 of these thousand years : *Esaiah* speaks
 e thus. *There shall be a new Heaven,*
 al *and a new Earth, and there shall be no*
 e *more remembrance of former things, &c.*
 m *And there was among us a Man called*
 t *John, one of Christ's twelve Disciples,*
 . *who in the Revelation that was given*
 r *unto him, hath prophesied, that the*
 Faith-

Faithful of Christ shall inhabit Jerusalem a thousand years, and that after that time there shall come the general Resurrection and the Judgment.

And in the same Dialogue *Trypho* asks *Justin*, 'whether he believed, 'That *Jerusalem* should be builded again, and whether the Christians 'should assemble there, and enjoy 'themselves with Christ in Company of the Patriarchs and Prophets? To which *Justin* makes this Peremptory Reply, 'That Christ shall come 'again to *Jerusalem*, and there 'eat and drink with his Disciples, &c. and enjoy Satiety of Pleasures.

Justin was a very considerable Personage, and one, who after he had run through all sorts of Philosophy, at last devoted himself to *Platonism*, as that which gave him, above all others, the clearest Notion of the true God. His Conversion to Christianity was very singular, for it was effected by means of an old Man, who

who occasionally met him, and was wholly unknown to him. After he was made a Christian, he wore the Habit, and followed the Study of Philosophy, adding thereunto a profound Knowledge of Scripture : And none can justly blame you for wondering that a Man so skilful in Christianity, should so far Judaize as to hold, The rebuilding of *Jerusalem*, The reigning of *Messias* on Earth in Splendour and Puissance, together with his Followers the Patriarchs and Prophets.

But this was not the only Failure of *Justin* ; for it is very observable, that both he and most of those who favour'd *Millennianism*, were guilty of such strange Visions, as had for ever ruin'd their Memories, had they not been considerable for great Moralities. As to *Justin*, the renowned Apologist for Christianity, and Holy Martyr of our Lord, besides his Judaizing in point

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of

of the *Millennium*, he maintained other Opinions, which are not now look'd upon as very Orthodox; as might be instanc'd in his Judgment concerning the Trinity, and the condition of departed Souls: For he held, ' That those of wicked Men
' were to die at last; and that when
' God had punished them as much as
' he would, they should surcease not
' only to be tormented, but to be at
' all. And for the Souls of just Men
' he was of the Opinion, that till
' Christ came, they were kept Pri-
' soners by the Dæmons. The De-
' vils (he taught) were ignorant of
' their own Damnation until Christ
' came in the Flesh: That the
' Heathen who lived honestly,
' tho' they knew not Christ, were
' saved. These Doctrines with more
of the like sort, are to be met with
in his Apologies and Dialogues:
In which he was not singular, many
of the Ancients being of the same
mind with *Justin*.

But

But I will trouble you no more with this nor any other great names, that are usually produced as Vouchers for *Millennianism*, which in a short time began to sink mightily in its Reputation, and to be as much disliked as ever it had been before admired. And in the Fourth Age, when some attempted to revive and give it new credit among Christians, the Project was so odious and disgusting, that *Damasus*, Bishop of *Rome*, received a general Applause and Commendation for condemning and censuring the *Millenary* Doctrine, and those who favour'd it.

Damasus, as I told you, having with general Satisfaction and Applause, condemn'd and censured *Millennianism*; after this it for a long long time seem'd quite extinct, and no more was heard of it till the entrance of the last Century: About which time it began again to appear, but in a Shape and Dress much

diff'ring from the first *Melennianism*. For the Modern *Millennaries* will have nothing to do with the gross and carnal Conceit of *Cerinthus*, but utterly disown all such brutal Enjoyments, as that Heretick made the Accomplishment of his *Millennium*. And they condemn the ancient Fathers for adhering to the same Humour. And as for the *Chilists* of this Century, they have labour'd to make their Opinion come up to the Genius of Religion, and to the Taste of thinking Men.

But the *Millennians* are not at Unity among themselves, but differ very much in the Traditive, or Method of delivering their Opinion. For there are some would have this prosperous State of the Church upon Earth not to last only a Thousand, but Millions of Years. But the soberer of them agree in these two principal Branches of the Opinion: *First*, 'That our 'Lord Jesus is to come visibly, and
'bodily

‘bodily to reign upon Earth with
 ‘Believers, his faithful Subjects, a
 ‘thousand Years: And to execute the
 ‘great, terrible, and general Judge-
 ‘ment. And they build their Con-
 jecture upon these Words of St. *John*
 the Divine, *viz. And they lived and*
reigned with Christ a thousand Years.
Rev. 20. 4. These Words (*with*
Christ) they say, are Emphatical, and
 signifie, That our Lord must needs
 come down and be upon the Earth,
 during the time his Kingdom is to
 be here below, or otherwise the
 Saints cannot be said to reign with
 him.

Secondly, The *Chialists* generally
 hold, ‘That all those who have been
 ‘put to death for the name of Christ,
 ‘as well under the *Roman* Emperors
 ‘as others, shall be raised and par-
 ‘take of the Joy and Happiness of
 ‘this Reign, together with those
 ‘Saints, who shall then be found a-
 ‘live. And for this Branch of their
 Opinion they alledge those other

Words of St. John, viz. *And I saw the Souls of those that were beheaded for the Witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the Beast, neither his Image, neither had received his Mark upon their Foreheads, or in their Hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first Resurrection.* And because it is here said, That the rest of the Dead lived not again until the thousand Years were finished, they conclude, that all those Believers who dyed natural Deaths, or by any accident, that had nothing in it common with Martyrdom for the Cause of Christ, were not to rise until the Last and Great Day.

Moses Amyraldus writes of some who supposed this coming of our Lord to reign Personally on Earth for a thousand Years, was not convenient for his Glory, nor agreeable to

to the Word of God ; and therefore they understood Christ's presence upon Earth, not of the effective Transport and Removal of his Person, but of a more express and particular Revelation of his Power, accompanied with a more clear and perfect knowledge of the Truth. For the Lord in Scripture is said to come, when in some extraordinary manner he manifests his Power: These Men do believe that the Martyrs shall be raised, but they could not comprehend, that being raised they should stay so long here below, because of the many inconveniences that would inevitably attend it. And therefore being risen, they believed that they were to be received up into Heaven, and to take Possession of Happiness until the rest of the Faithful should come to be their Partners at the second Resurrection.

But there were others, who understood these Words of the Divine, neither of Christ's Corporal Presence on Earth, nor of the real Resurrection of the Martyrs. For they observe, That the Scripture generally speaks but of one effective Resurrection of the Body, and that to be universal: So that they cannot be brought to think that all the other inspired Pen-men should pass over in silence so great and concerning a Point, if any such thing was ever to happen. And upon this Consideration they interpret St. *John's* first Resurrection metaphorically, and understand it of the Reparation of the Martyrs Credit: And that whereas they had been defam'd upon Earth, and traduc'd as Hereticks, and troublesome seditious Persons, who deserved the Punishments they endured, that the time would come, when they should be acknowledged to have been the good and faithful Servants of God, when their Memories

ries should be celebrated with Blessing and Praise ; which to them should be a sort of Resurrection.

Again, there were others who applied and confin'd the *Millennium* to the Enlargement and Prosperity of the Reform'd Church ; which though now lock'd up in a Corner, should then be extended through all the World ; that both *Jew* and *Gentile* being brought into it, and become Professors of the Reformed Religion, the Church should enjoy a profound Peace, and a general Prosperity, and that none should dare to disturb it : For *Babylon* shall be destroyed, the Man of Sin discomfited, and Satan restrained from seducing the Nations ; for he shall be imprison'd in the bottomless Pit, and bound in Chains, so that the Gospel shall be no more persecuted at his Instigation, nor suffer by any ill usage whatsoever: But the Church shall rule over those who before destroyed

stroy'd her, and dispose of them as
 she pleases : And for this they pro-
 duce St. John, who saith, *That he*
saw Thrones, and they that sat upon
them reigned with Christ ; And that
 of Daniel, where he foretold, *That*
the Kingdom and Dominion, and the
greatness of the Kingdom under the
whole Heaven, shall be given to the
People of the Saints of the most High,
whose Kingdom is an everlasting King-
dom, and all Dominions shall serve and
obey him, Dan. 7. 27. And this hap-
 py condition of the Church is to
 last a very marvellous long time, e-
 ven for a thousand years ; or as o-
 thers, who take that number inde-
 finitely, to Eternity. And when
 this comes to pass, all Earthly Pow-
 ers shall be destroy'd, and no Domi-
 nion shall appear but that of the
 People of the Saints ; whose Sove-
 reignty and Rule will be over all ac-
 cording as was prefigured in that
 Stone cut out without Hands, which
 smote Nebuchadnezzar's Image, and
 broke it in pieces. And

And yet notwithstanding that the *Millennian* Gentlemen are all for subjecting the World, yet they are not agreed how this great Conquest will be effected: For those Scriptures which speak clearliest of the thing, are silent as to the manner. Some are so hardy as to affirm it must be done with Force; and that the Angel standing in the Sun, shall cry with a loud Voice, and say to all the Fowls that fly in the midst of Heaven, 'Come and gather your selves together unto the Supper of the Great God; and eat the Flesh of Kings, and the Flesh of Captains, and the Flesh of mighty Men, &c. And when this sort of Cannibal-Supper is ended, the *Millennium* is to begin.

But formerly its Commencement was not ascertained; for there were some that held it was to begin before the Resurrection, and some after it. And to reconcile this Difference

rence! they invented a double Resurrection; one of the Martyrs, which they call the First Resurrection; and the other of all Men, which they term the Second. And the *Millennium* they say, shall begin after the former and before the latter.

But there are yet other Particularities in which the *Chialists* are not unanimous, for they differ about the very Nature of the Opinion; some looking upon it as merely probable, and leave the whole Business to the Event: and others would obtrude it upon the Church as a necessary Doctrine; and these, to hasten the *Millennium*, would have all impious Magistrates violently taken out of the way; because, according to their wild Opinions, till they be destroyed, this Kingdom cannot begin: For it is to consist in universal Peace, Plenty and Righteousness, which they have not hopes to see flourish upon Earth, while there
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are any wicked *Powers* left here below that may disturb it.

The *Millennians* were once at no better Agreement concerning the place where this wonderful Dispensation is to be transacted: For some confined it only to *Palestine*; and others said it should be spread over the whole Earth. The duration likewise of this Transcendent Reign has been controverted; for though they now limit it precisely to a Thousand Years, yet there have been not a few who durst not be so peremptory, but held that the length thereof was only made known unto God. There was a time too when no better Harmony was among the *Millennaries* concerning the Subjects of this Kingdom; for some will have all the Saints to rise from the Dead and reign in it: And others will have none to partake of this Honour but the Martyrs; whom they thought were to die again before the Last Judg-

Judgment ; though others will have them to live and reign with Christ for ever. But what is yet farther remarkable, the *Millennianists* disagree about the Topicks of proving their Opinion ; for some would prove it by Apostolick Tradition, and the Scriptures ; others by the *Sibylline* Oracles, and *Heathen* Poets : And some for the Proof of it, have made use of all these together, with some Passages out of the Apocryphal Books. And now seeing the Patrons of the *Millennium* are not well agreed among themselves concerning it, nor what Arguments are most proper to be used in its Defence, it is a shrewd Prejudice against them, that they have no good Ground for what they hold.

St. *Jerom*, out of the Writings of *Lactantius*, gives us a large Description of this *Millennary* State ; and he makes it so charming and full of Delights, that I took it for a Character of Heaven. And I had still

still rested under the Power of that Notion, had I not met with brute Creatures in this Paradise ; which according to their Capacity are as happy as the Saints ; for they live in absolute Peace and Plenty, free from Fear and Servitude. Being deliver'd from their natural Ferities, all Antipathies being extinguished in them ; and the Lion has no more of Enmity left him, than Saint *Laurence* of a mischievous Passion : A happy State for the Brutes, if it might be everlasting ! But what will become of the regenerate Bears and Wolves when the *Millennium* is determined ? their own harmless Deportment, one would think, should secure them from violent Destruction ; but where their Happiness will be continued, is not easie for the *Millennian* to find out : For he will scarce allow them to go along with the Saints when the *Millennium* is ended. But my Business is not to argue,

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but represent. And if what I write may help to set the *Millennium* in a full Light, I have my Design.

I would gladly here demand of the *Millennian*, where he places the chief Strength of his Opinion? Whether in the Authority of the Persons who first held it, or in the Validity of the Reasons which led them to hold it: If in the former, we may lay in the Balance against it, the Authority of others, as Wise and Learned, who were against it; if in the latter, *viz.* the Reasons brought for it, we must then consider if they will hold weight. But at present we will enquire whether Christ has spoken any thing in Countenance of this Kingdom, or rather whether he has not spoken against it; for if our Lord appear its Enemy, not all the Wit of Man can defend it.

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To constitute the *Millennium* it is necessary that Christ descend from Heaven, and visibly reign on Earth in Pomp and Grandeur, and with Power and Dominion like other Earthly Kings, but in a way and Perfection far transcending them. Now this is such a Kingdom as our Lord seems quite to disown. For in his Conference with *Pilate*, who was very desirous to be informed of the Manner and Nature of his Kingdom, he gave him plainly to understand that he was to have no such Kingdom as the *Jews* expected, and the *Romans* feared. For, saith he, *my Kingdom is not of this World*, John 18. 36. that is, I have no Earthly Kingdom; for if I had, my Subjects would never suffer me to be thus treated: They would engage in a Military way to defend me from being delivered into the Hands of my Enemies, and assist me, as all good Subjects, ought to assist their King. And he was so far from

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favouring the Opinion some had of his having an Earthly Kingdom, that he took all occasions to declare against it.

Of which we have two remarkable instances : the one in the sharp Reprimand he gave that forward Disciple, who drew sword in his Defence, commanding him to put it into the Sheath, and letting him know, that he came not to be a King on Earth, but a Martyr, and patiently endure the malicious Injustice of his Adversaries, and not with armed Violence to repell them. The second instance of his being against an Earthly Kingdom, was his Retirement to his Privacy and Prayers in the Mountain, when he perceived they would take him by force, and make him a King, *St. John* 6. 15.

It was the received Opinion, saith *Tacitus* and *Suetonius*, that about the time our Lord appeared in the World, a great King should

should arise in *Judea*, whom the *Jews* believed should work their Deliverance, and revenge them on the Nations who had got the Dominion over them. And when the *Jews* had seen Christ's Miracle in feeding a great Multitude with small Provision, they concluded that he was the mighty King they expected; and they conjectured rightly enough, that he was able to sustain the most numerous Army with a very little charge, whom they saw to have fed so great a Company with Five Barley Loaves and Two small Fishes; and that the Fragments which remained were more than what was first set on the Table. And now in all haste they would make him their King; and in case he refused, they were resolved to force him. But to convince them that he was to undertake no such Employment, he departed out of their Hands, and utterly rejected the Proposition;

tion ; and so prevented their Design.

Nor will it suffice to alledge, That Christ only declared against having a Kingdom on Earth at that time ; and that he was to have one afterwards, when the Earth was regenerate and renewed, and fit to receive him from Heaven. For not one Word ever fell from our Lord's Lips to this purpose : And if our Lord were ever to have had such a Kingdom on Earth, as the *Millennian* asserts, he had now a fair opportunity to own and to declare it, when the *Roman* Governour urged him to declare what sort of Kingdom his was, and whether or no he was a King ? As to his Kingdom, he told him it was not of this World, not Corporal and Earthly ; which *St. Paul* calls a good *Confession*, 1 Tim 6. 13. a fair and generous Acknowledgment that he was not to have any such Kingdom as *Pilate* suspected. And as to his
being

being a King, he told him without any reserve, that he was incarnate, and born in humane Flesh to be a King ; and that one end of his coming into the World, was to testify this Truth, That he was a King ; and that every true Servant of God was convinced thereof, and did receive and obey him as their King. But he still denied to have any Corporal visible Kingdom on Earth ; and gave not the least Intimation that he ever was to have such an one. And I appeal to the Holy Oracles of both Testaments, if they mention any other Kingdom of Christ than what is Heavenly, Spiritual, and Eternal.

That Christ's Kingdom is eminently in Heaven, and that that is the place where he is exalted to the highest degree of Glory, and that from thence he is to come to judge the Quick and Dead, and return back as he came, with Power and great Glory, when that General

Sessions are over, has ever been the Creed of the Catholick Church. That our Lord reigns in Believers Hearts by the Gospel, which is the Scepter of his Kingdom, and by the Holy Ghost which the Father sent down from Heaven to manage the Government of the Church, as it is a Truth acknowledged by all, so it is enough to denominate his Kingdom to be Spiritual. That his Kingdom is not to determinate after a certain number of years, but that thereof there is no end, is the Doctrine of the *Nicene Belief*, and attested by the Angel in *St. Luke 1. 33.* That Christ's Kingdom is essentially but one, though by Reason of the various Dispensations and Conditions thereof, it has several Names (as of *Grace, Glory, &c.*) has ever been the Doctrine of the Scriptures. Now it will not be very easie to make these Properties of Christ's Kingdom applicable to the *Millennium*: Because the *Millennium* is

is a Kingdom on Earth, in which Christ is to reign over the Bodies of the Saints, and which after a Thousand years must have an end; and so is not eternal, but temporal and transitory.

And if it be said that the *Millennium* is a Kingdom of it self, and has its own Particularities and Attributes, distinct from Christ's other Kingdom, then it will follow, that our Lord has more Kingdoms than one, which none hitherto has been found to maintain: Nor is there any Ground whereon to build such a Conclusion.

The taking up of the Cross is a Condition so inseparably annexed to the Profession of Christianity, that Three Evangelists have from Christ's own Mouth recorded it: And our Lord, who could not but be apprehensive how irksome the thoughts thereof must needs be to humane Nature, supported his Dis-

ciples with the assurance, That their Afflictions should be rewarded with unspeakable Happiness: But then this Happiness was to be enjoyed only in Heaven; for he gives them not the least Intimation of any such thing, as a pleasant and glorious *Millennium* here on Earth. If our Lord had designed the Saints any such Felicity below, after they had for his sake undergone many Tribulations, one would think that either by himself or his Apostles, some mention would have been made thereof; it being a thing very remarkable, and of great use in all the Ages of the Church, to comfort and encourage Martyrs and Confessors: But not one Word is heard from them to this purpose. Now it is at least a probable Argument that the Apostles knew nothing of a *Millennium*, because they no where mention it: And yet they knew all those places of the old Testament

ment the *Millennians* produce for their Opinion, and all the Visions that were ever addressed to any Pen man of the New Testament ; and yet we find not one Syllable out of either is made use of by them in behalf of this earthly Reign.

How many things were foretold by St. *Paul* that were to come to pass in the latter times, touching the Vices and Immoralities that were then to happen ; touching the revealing of the Man of Sin, and what it was that retarded it ; touching the Calling of the *Jews*, and their Conversion ; and touching the fearful Judgments that were to befall the Persecutors of the Gospel. Yet among all these things he is deeply silent concerning the Peace, Prosperity, Power, Plenty, Righteousness, &c. which (we are told) the Church shall enjoy on Earth for a Thousand years. The Apostle must needs have known as well as any of the *Millennians*.

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if ever there was to be such a Kingdom upon Earth, as that of the Thousand years: He could not but also perceive how much the hope thereof would have supported the Minds of the persecuted Christians, and daunted their Persecutors: And yet for all this, that St. *Paul* in the Account given by him of Christ's coming to take Vengeance of his Adversaries, and to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that Day, that he should not drop one Word of the *Millennium*, if he thought there would be any such thing, and when it would have been very natural to have mentioned it, must to a Man that thinks, seem somewhat strange.

But if after all this the *Millennium* appears to be a Scriptural Doctrine, then my Task is to turn *Berean*, and to search the Scriptures, and try if we can find it there.

I know but one place of Holy Writ where the *Millennium* Reign is expressly mentioned, and that is Rev. 20. We will set down the Passage entire.

1. *And I saw an Angel come down from Heaven, having the Key of the bottomless Pit, and a great Chain in his Hand.*

2. *And he laid hold on the Dragon, that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a Thousand Years,*

3. *And cast him into the bottomless Pit, and shut him up, and set a Seal upon him, that he should deceive the Nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little Season.*

4. *And I saw Thrones, and they sat upon them, and Judgment was given unto them: And I saw the Souls of them that were beheaded for the Witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped*
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ped the Beast, neither his Image, neither had received his Mark upon their Foreheads, or in their Hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

5. But the rest of the Dead lived not again untill the thousand years were finished. This is the First Resurrection.

6. Blessed and Holy is he that hath part in the First Resurrection. On such the Second Death hath no Power; but they shall be Priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

In these Words are laid the Foundation of *Millennianism*; but how fit they are to bear up that Opinion, comes to be considered.

The Divine in a Vision receives the Representation of a wonderful prosperous State that the Christian Church was to enjoy. And then sets down wherein this Happy State of the Church was to
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consist; when it was to begin; and how long to continue.

The happy State of the Church here foretold, was to consist in chaining up the Devil, which was to be done by Christ the great Angel of the Covenant. But it does not signifie that the Devil should be so bound up by Christ, as that he should not persecute, disturb, or disquiet the Church as he had done: And that all along these thousand years there should not one cloud of disquietude or disturbance be raised by him or his Instruments, to eclipse the Church's Peace and Tranquility. For there is not a Word that the Devil should be thus bound: But the binding of him was, That he should not deceive the Nations any more, as it is in the *Greek*. The Devil had deceived and kept the poor Heathen in a miserable Delusion by Idols, Oracles, false Miracles and horrid Mysteries of Irreligioness: From their first

casting off at the Confusion of *Babel*, till the Gospel was brought in among them by the Apostles, which was above two thousand years. And the *Gentiles* had still continued under the Delusion of the Devil, if Christ by the Gospel had not dissolved his Charms, brought down Idolatry, silenced his Oracles, and lying Wonders, and restrained his Malice in persecuting the Church, and shortned his Power in corrupting the World. And this seems clearly to be the meaning of binding of *Satan*, and casting him into the Abyss, shutting and Sealing him up, that he should no longer deceive the Nations : And during all this time the Devil was thus restrained, the Christian Profession was to flourish, and the Condition of the Church to be wonderful happy in respect of what it had been before : And this was here signified first, by the Thrones, and the sitting on them, and giving Judgment to

to them that sat on them ; which Words may have a double Reference, one to the Church, and another to the Civil State ; and both expressing the prosperous Condition of Christianity. As they have a peculiar Eye to the Church, they foretell her great Happiness in having her Assemblies very numerous and in excellent Government, her Censures and Discipline having an effectual Force and Power over all her Members. And as they look unto the Civil State, they show that when the *Gentiles* should be converted, that God would set up Thrones, that is, Kings and Magistrates, and put Judgment into their Hands, and that these Christian Powers should Rule and Judge in the World, as the *Heathen* had done before.

The *Jews* had a Conceit and Fancy, that when *Messias* came, he should Reign among them a Thousand years, and destroy the *Heathen*,
and

and break them with a Rod of Iron,
 and dash them in pieces like a Pot-
 ters Vessel. To which Opinion the
 Divine here alludes ; who, that he
 might be the better understood by
 the *Jews*, makes use of an Expres-
 sion well known among them, and
 tells them, ‘ That whereas they
 ‘ had an Imagination, that *Messias*
 ‘ will have a Pompous , Splendid ,
 ‘ Glorious Kingdom among them ;
 ‘ and that they should reign with him
 ‘ in Worldly State and Magnificence ;
 ‘ That he would crush, and sub-
 ‘ due all those *Heathen* who shall
 ‘ then exercise Dominion over them.
 Now to rectifie this gross Mistake,
 he tells them, and that from God,
 ‘ That the Reign of the *Messias* shall
 ‘ be among the Nations , or the
 ‘ *Gentiles* ; and that he would not
 ‘ destroy, as they erroneously ima-
 ‘ gined, but deliver them from the
 ‘ Power and Delusions of Satan ;
 ‘ and that he would chain up that
 ‘ old Serpent, that he deceive the
 ‘ Na

‘ Nations no more as he had done :
 ‘ But that whereas before they
 ‘ for a very long time had been
 ‘ only taught of the Devil, now
 ‘ that of *Eſay* ſhould be fulfilled,
 ‘ viz. *Thy Children ſhall be taught*
 ‘ of God, *Eſay* 54. 13. Which
 our Lord himſelf applies to the
 preſent purpoſe, *St. John* 6. 45.

And ſpeaking how Chriſt
 would diſpoſe of the Heathen
 when he ſhould have brought
 them in from under the Deceiv-
 ings of the Old Serpent, to the
 Knowledge and Profeſſion of the
 Goſpel, he ſaith, *He would give*
them Thrones ; that is, he would
 plat-form them into Kingdoms,
 States, and Civil Government,
 and that he would ſet up Chri-
 ſtian Kings and Magiſtrates a-
 mong them, who ſhould be
 Nurling Fathers of the Church,
 and Defenders of the Faith.
 And that whereas the *Jews*
 dreamed of reigning with the
 F *Meſſias,*

Messias, our Apocalyptick tells them, 'That they were greatly
' mistaken, and that none were
' to reign with *Messias* but those
' that suffer with him : The Souls
' of them that were beheaded for
' the Witness of *Jesus*, and for
' the Word of God, and which
' had not worshipped the Beast,
' neither his Image, neither had
' received his Mark upon their
' Foreheads : These are they that
' were to Live and Reign with
' Christ a thousand years.

The *Millennian* Doctrine supposes, That Christ must come down on Earth, and have a new Kingdom here in this World. But here is no such thing spoken of, no mention at all of any new Reign of Christ on Earth. But the Kingdom of Christ here spoken of, is that which he had before, and that which is every where called his Kingdom; and that those who
had

had been beheaded or killed, and that had not worshipped, &c. were to be admitted into a Participation of that Kingdom with him.

Two things are here to be enquired into: First, What is meant by the Beheaded, and non-Worshippers of the Image, &c? for I take them to be all one and the same Men: And next, What by Living and Reigning?

And first, by the Γεπελευσμενοι *Securi percussi*, which we render Beheaded, must be meant the constant persevering Servants of Christ, such as were Faithful unto Death, and in their Combats and Oppositions, of the Idolatries and Practices of the Heathen, resisted unto Blood: Such as in a Pious, Constant, Courageous Confession of the Truth, had held out against the Beast and his Image; that is, as some understand these Terms, Against

worshipping *Jupiter Capitolinus*, or the Idols in the Capitol at *Rome*, and other such like as were set up in divers places of the *Roman Empire*.

Now I do not think the very same individual particular Persons, who at any time had been slain for the Sake of Christ, were, at the *Millennium*, to return to Life again; and that their Souls should leave their State of Bliss and Quiet, and be reunited to their Bodies, then to be raised and restored. But I am rather inclin'd to understand this Branch of the Vision, of a Succession of Men, who were to be like those that with wonderful Constancy and Courage, had born Witness to the Truth, and seal'd their Testimony with their Blood. For I look upon the Church as a fluid Body, which always runs in a Succession of Parts, and that it is like the
River

River *Euphrates*, where one Stream instantly follows another without the least discontinuation or disunion. *Labitur & labetur* ; The River is the same, though the Parts thereof are in continual Change and Motion, succeeding one another. For unless the Church be thus considered it would be hard to make her capable of the Promises God has made for her continual Preservation. For neither to particular Christians, nor to the Church of all the Christians in one Age, can be applyed this Promise, *viz.* *That the Gates of Hell shall never prevail against her.* But it is most comfortably applicable to the Church in an uninterrupted Succession of Christians ; against whom the most implacable Adversary shall never be able so far to prevail, as wholly to extirpate or destroy this Succession. And I doubt not but these Words,
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[*The Souls of them that were beheaded, &c. lived and reigned with Christ a thousand Years,*] are to be understood as those that follow, *ver. 5.* where it is said, [*The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand Years were finished.*] Now, there is none that have concluded from hence, That the same numerical Idolaters, and Apostate Unchristian Livers, which liv'd before the *Millennium*, should at the end thereof, revive or come to life again, and act over their old Impieties. But that when the *Millennium* is expired, Satan should again be let loose, and freed from his Confinement, and fall to his old Trade of deceiving the Nations, and that there should spring up a Race of Idolaters and Unchristian Livers, like those that were before the thousand Years began. So that in both places a Succession of
other

other Persons, and not a reviving of the same, may very consistently be understood.

As to the living and reigning of these Men with Chrill, it does not imply that they revived, and were rais'd, as the *Chilias*t affirms, but it is a Phrase, setting forth the Happy State and Condition of Christians; and that they should live, that is, be prosperous, and enjoy a wonderful great Quiet in their Religion, and Reign; or Sit upon Thrones, and have Judgment given unto them, that is, peaceably possess Judicatures and Censures, and have a free and powerful Exercise of Discipline, which is the best Preserver of Purity. And, that the Earthly Powers at this time being Christian, the Church, by their Countenance and Favour, should quietly enjoy the use of the Keys, until Satan was once more
let

let loose, and instigated wicked Men to break these Bonds asunder, and cast off these Cords from them.

The next thing to be considered, is the time when this Happy State began. And though this be a thing of some doubt, because of the several Periods of time wherein the Destruction of Heathenism in the *Roman* Empire may be placed: (For so great a Change was not done all at once, but by degrees, and at several times,) yet the *Epoche* of this Prosperity, is generally fix'd in the time of *Constantine*, when he set up Ecclesiastical Judicatures in his Empire, and bestow'd many eminent Immunities and Priviledges upon the Church, above all that it ever had enjoyed before.

It was in his time that the Church was arrayed in fine Linen, Clean and White : It was in

in his time that the Nations thunder'd *Hallelujahs* to God for the illustrious Enlargement of Christ's Kingdom at the Conversion of the Imperial City to Christianity. It was in *Constantine's* time that the Profession of the Christian Religion was free, safe, and publick : and that the Orthodox enjoy'd a peaceable, prosperous, flourishing Estate, instead of their former unquiet, miserable, and persecuted Condition. For when the Emperor embrac'd the Faith, put an end to the Persecutions, and by Decree proclaimed Liberty of Christianity ; it was then, I am of Opinion, that *Satan* was bound, and the *Millennium*, or Prosperity of the Church began. And agreeable to this beginning may be assigned an end to these thousand Years. For if the binding of *Satan* bare Date from *Constantine's*

G

tine's Edict , and the letting of him loose be placed at the rising of the *Ottoman* Family, and bringing *Asia* and *Greece* to *Ma-hometism*, there will be about a Thousand Years. During which time the Christian Church was in a flourishing Condition, compared with her State, both before this *Millennium* began, and after it was expired. Nor are the Practices of *Julian* against the Christians, which soon followed after *Constantine's* favour to them, yield any irreconcilable opposition to what has been said. For those who give an Account of this Apostate's Carriage, tho' they every where acquaint us with his malicious Intentions against the Christians, yet they likewise shew how wonderfully God prevented him : And how his Power and Fidelity appear'd in making good his Promise to the Christian Church, in restrain-
 ing

ing this Apostate's Malice from disquieting her.

And now by what has been last said, this Passage of Holy Writ appears to be but a very feeble Foundation to support *Millennianism*. For though the Prophet did here foretell an happy *Millennium* to the Church; yet it is such a *Millennium*, as had but little or no Resemblance with that which is modernly asserted. At the expiration of the Apocalyptick *Millennium*, the fetter'd Devil was to be let loose; and in revenge of his long Confinement, we may well suppose him, with greater Malice and Activity, to endeavour the Corruption and Disquietude of the Church. But at the end of the Modern *Millennium* no such thing is to happen; but there shall streightway follow the general Resurrection and Judgment; where every Man's Eternal Fate shall

shall be decided by an irreversible Sentence.

And yet after all, it cannot be deny'd but some eminent Personages of the first Ages of the Church, did favour the *Millenian* Opinion; but they were but Men, whom we may as well think to err in this, as they did in Matters of far greater Importance.

Had the Catholick Church (represented in some General Council) ever taken notice of this Doctrine, and approved it, then all Dispute concerning it had been at an end. But never any such thing has hitherto hapned. And therefore give me leave, with a learned *Sorbonist*, to call your celebrated Doctrine, *Famosum Antiquitatis Delirium*.

F I N I S.

